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## ABSTRACT

This paper describes the state of training, licensing, and certification of early childhood personnel in the state of Washington. Arguing that presently in the state there is no set of regulations dealing with both certification and/or licensing of personnel working in early childhood programs, the author recommends a coordinated effort in institutional training and education of early childhood personnel. Following the suggestions that such efforts build upon knowledge and skill development achieved by the learner and that programs maintain a uniform high quality of preparation, the author recommends that the certification of early childhood personnel should be based on the recognition, knowledge, skill, and job needs of the profession. Specific guidelines for training a wide range of early childhood personnel, based on the recommendations above, are provided. (MP)

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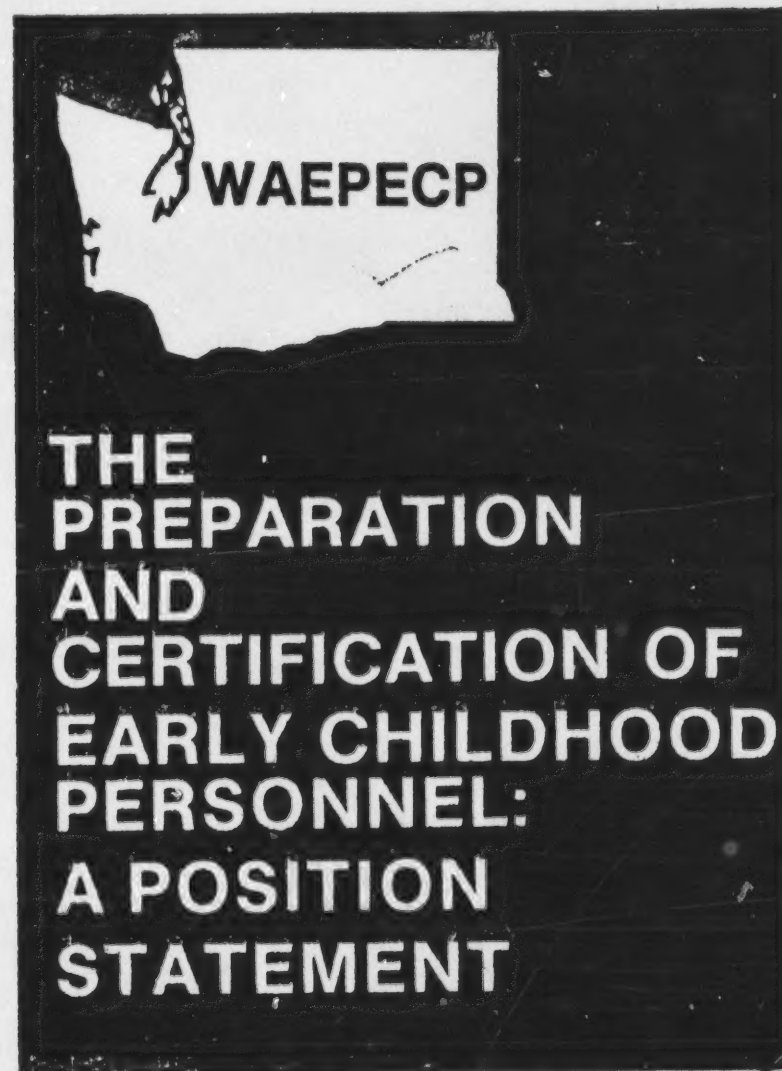
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## Washington Association for Educators of Personnel in Early Childhood Programs



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# The Preparation and Certification of Early Childhood Personnel

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper represents one description of the present state of training, licensing, and certification in the State of Washington. It recommends a coordinated effort among institution training and educating early childhood personnel that builds upon learning and skill development achieved by the learner and maintains a uniform high quality preparation. This document recommends that the certification of early childhood personnel recognize the knowledge, skill and job needs of the profession. Presently in the State of Washington there is no set of regulations dealing with both certification and/or licensing of personnel working in early childhood programs.

This document<sup>1</sup> is addressed to all who are responsible for the organization and implementation of training and certification of early childhood personnel.

## II. MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS

Some major assumptions about training and certification are summarized as follows:

- A. The training and certification of early childhood personnel are inseparable concerns which require a coordinated approach.
- B. All personnel involved with the developmental care and instruction of children from birth to approximately five years of age constitute a coherent unit of the human service work force.
- C. Before certification, early childhood personnel should be able to demonstrate competency in the skills which they are expected to perform after certification.
- D. A training experience for early childhood personnel must be flexible enough to meet the trainees' differences in experience, learning style, rate and objectives.
- E. A quality training process alerts the trainee to a variety of studies (breadth) and also prepares him/her for further in-depth training.
- F. A training process for early childhood personnel considers the needs of the community and responds to them.

<sup>1</sup>Appreciation is expressed to D. Peters and M. McNicol for material from their work *The Training and Certification of Early Childhood Personnel: A Position Paper*. Pennsylvania: Center for Human Services Development, June, 1972, which was adapted for use in this document.

These assumptions necessitate the formulation of: 1) a competency-based training-certification system; 2) training which stresses both formal and informal experiences; and 3) planning and evaluation which is responsive to community, early childhood programs, and training institutions.

### III. CURRENT TRAINING EARLY CHILDHOOD PERSONNEL

Currently, training is accomplished in a variety of settings (including work settings, vocational-technical institutes and community colleges, colleges and universities), each following guidelines according to their own standards. The standards set, consequently, vary from agency to agency, from facility to facility, and from educational institution to educational institution. Classification of early childhood personnel, and the labels provided for them, also differ even though all such personnel are in daily contact with children ranging in age from infancy to approximately 5 years.

### IV. CURRENT PROGRAMS EMPLOYING EARLY CHILDHOOD PERSONNEL

The programs employing early childhood personnel include day care centers (including mini-centers), day care homes, preschools (e.g. parent-cooperative and/or private nursery schools, play, music, art, recreation groups, etc.), public and private schools and social agencies, to name the major ones.

Within these programs, personnel are on a continuum of preparation and experience to assume varying levels of responsibility.<sup>2</sup> However, the term professional staff is used to identify those responsible for the planning, instruction, and supervision of the children's daily experiences. Paraprofessionals refer to trained personnel who assist the professional personnel and work under their guidance.

<sup>2</sup>"Career Ladder for Personnel Working with Young Children and Their Families"

Within these multiple settings the standards or requirements for personnel employed to work with young children may be summarized as follows:

#### A. DAY CARE CENTERS (Including Mini-Centers)

The formal preparation of persons caring for children in day care centers ranges from no post-secondary education through the masters degree.

Minimum requirements are specified by WAC 388-73-450.

##### **Professional:**

Type a No post-secondary education with experience ranging from none to several years in child care and development.

Type b One-year certificate in early childhood from either a vocational-technical institute or community college.

Type c Two-year community college associate degree in early childhood.

Type d Four-year baccalaureate degree in child development, home economics, and/or early childhood education/elementary education.

##### **Paraprofessional:**

At entry level, little or no experience with child care.

## **B. DAY CARE HOME**

Minimum requirements are specified by WAC 388-73-030.

## **C. PRESCHOOLS (Parent-cooperative and/or private nursery schools, play, music, art, recreation groups, etc.)**

Minimum requirements — no requirements exist. No agency has jurisdiction.

### **Professional:**

Type a No post-secondary education with experience ranging from none to several years in child care and development.

Type b One-year certificate in early childhood from either a vocational-technical institute or community college.

Type c Two-year community college associate degree in early childhood.

Type d Four-year baccalaureate degree in child development, home economics, and/or early childhood education/elementary education.

### **Paraprofessional:**

At entry level, little or no experience with child care.

## **D. PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### *Professional:*

A baccalaureate degree is required and post-graduate study is necessary for attainment of the Standard Certificate. The professional education program must be approved by the State Board of Education. Persons completing teacher preparation programs at accredited institutions may be recommended for state certification.

### *Paraprofessional:*

Completion of a training program by the paraprofessional is not always required for entry level employment.

## **E. PRIVATE SCHOOLS**

### *Professional:*

Requirements for the professional role in private schools are the same as described for the public schools with the following exceptions:

"... a) Teachers for religious courses or courses for which no counterparts exist in public schools shall not be required to obtain a state certificate to teach those courses; b) in exceptional cases, people of unusual competence but without certification may teach students so long as a certified person exercises general supervision."<sup>3</sup>

### *Paraprofessional:*

(See Public Schools)

## **F. SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES**

Minimum requirements vary depending on agency.

<sup>3</sup>State of Washington, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Chapter 180-90 WAC, Approval of Private Schools, Sept., 1977, page 5.

## **V. PROBLEMS IN THE PRESENT PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS**

In the present situation a number of major shortcomings exist:

- A. The multiplicity of requirements and supervising agencies is confusing.
  - 1. Regulations for personnel working with children birth to five are inadequate or nonexistent.
  - 2. Public school teacher certification standards are specified for grades K through 12.
- B. The requirements for personnel in early childhood do not reflect the specific characteristics of:
  - 1) a particular employment level;
  - 2) a particular clientele population;
  - 3) the facility or institution of employment; and/or
  - 4) the length of time per day a child is enrolled in the program.
- C. The current perceptions of the roles of early childhood personnel are stereotyped and do not address emerging employment roles and needs.
- D. Job titles for early childhood personnel are inconsistent from agency to agency.
- E. Some education requirements for K through 12 certification may be irrelevant to the early childhood student and her/his performance in future work with children ages 0-8.
- F. Communities being served need to have a voice in establishing the definition of the training and certification of personnel particularly in relating to minority populations.
- G. Preparation programs for early childhood personnel have been described and disseminated. Needed is a continuous effort to coordinate preparations programs and to articulate programs among vocational-technical institutes, community colleges and four-year institutions.
- H. Minimum standards for early childhood positions are not uniformly applied.
- I. Because of changing needs, a method of continuous or recurrent appraisal of the certification requirements will be necessary. Professional growth and competence should be recognized as a career-long continuing process.

## **VI. THE PROPOSED SYSTEM**

The shortcomings of the present system suggest it is indeed necessary to organize both the means of training and the means of certifying early childhood personnel. As suggested earlier, no useful analysis may be made of one without consideration of the other. The development and the organization of a certification plan cannot be considered without also considering the training plan.

The objectives are as follows:

1. To describe components necessary in the preparation of early childhood personnel;
2. To propose high quality training toward certification for early childhood personnel;
3. To continue coordination and involvement of representatives from one-year, two-year, four-year training/educational institutions within the state in the step-by-step design and implementation of a model of certification.

A primary task is to develop a competency-based system which requires its implementers:

1. To define the goals to be accomplished;
2. To structure a learning sequence in such a way that there is the probability of success;
3. To assess the achieved competence in the child care environment;
4. To revise the order, content, or method of training to maximize realization of the goals.

The table on the following page describes the "Proposed Certification Steps for Early Childhood Personnel" according to:

1. Certification Levels
2. Requirements
3. Basic Core
4. Areas of Learning

The vocational-technical institutes and community colleges would primarily be responsible for training on Levels I and II. This means that the educators of early childhood personnel in these institutions must arrive at some consensus as to the minimum requirements for Levels I and II. There also needs to be a reasonable consistency in the areas of learning and the basic core requirements.

The Table defines Level III as the primary responsibility of the four-year institutions. It is suggested that the four-year institutions come to a consensus on the minimum requirements for a baccalaureate degree in early childhood. Coordination and involvement is mandated of representatives from one-year, two-year and four-year training/education institutions within the state in the step-by-step design and implementation of the training toward a certification mode.

Reasonable progress in inter-institutional coordination has been made and must now be carried forward.

## **VII. GUIDELINE FOR TRAINING A WIDE RANGE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PERSONNEL**

A competency-based system focuses its attention on the accomplishment of specified and measureable outcomes. The content of the outcomes for the preparation of early childhood teachers must be delineated with care. The

**TABLE I**  
**PROPOSED CERTIFICATION STEPS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PERSONNEL**

| Certification Levels | Requirements                                                                                        | Basic Core                                                                                            | Area of Learning                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level I              | 45 quarter credit hours in Early Childhood courses                                                  | Child development .....                                                                               | Introduction to Growth and Development, Health and First Aid, Nutrition, Exceptionality                                                                                                                            |
|                      | or                                                                                                  | Curriculum .....                                                                                      | Development of learning experience, multi-cultural, arts, language arts, math, science, physical activities, social studies                                                                                        |
|                      | 450 clock hours in Early Childhood courses and 550 clock hours in Early Childhood field experiences | History and Background of Early Childhood Services .....                                              | Professionalism<br>Introduction to Early Childhood: Curriculum Methods<br>Model Programs                                                                                                                           |
|                      | or                                                                                                  | Interpersonal Relations .....                                                                         | Self-awareness, Parent Involvement, Adult-to-Child/child-to-adult<br>Communications with others: staff, community<br>Group Management<br>Interagency referrals<br>Field Experiences in Early Childhood settings    |
|                      | The Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)                                                    | Practicum .....                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Level II             | Associate Degrees                                                                                   | SAME AS ABOVE PLUS                                                                                    | SAME AS ABOVE PLUS                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                      |                                                                                                     | Liberal Education .....                                                                               | Distribution Requirements (general education), i.e., Humanities<br>Communication, Social Science, Mathematics and Science<br>Remedial Learning Skills                                                              |
|                      |                                                                                                     | Skills in Acquiring Knowledge .....                                                                   | Development of skills in the utilization of:<br>Audio-Visual materials/equipment, library material<br>Decision-making, Assessment and Evaluation<br>Professional Associations through membership and participation |
| Level III            | Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science Degree                                                      | SAME AS ABOVE PLUS                                                                                    | SAME AS ABOVE PLUS                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                      |                                                                                                     | Interdisciplinary focus of preparation selected academic disciplines related to Early Childhood ..... | A broad perspective of academic disciplines plus a focus on an area of specialization, e.g., arts, child development, speech, recreation, etc.                                                                     |
|                      |                                                                                                     | Practice of Professional Skills .....                                                                 | Professional self-development, leadership, teaching group dynamics, counseling, administration, community relations, intra-agency coordination                                                                     |

*Prepared by WAEPCP Task Force members: Ruth Benoliel, Roberta Bouverat, Lucy Charnisy, Jean McKenzie, Sherrill Richarz, Jackie Stenger.*

## CAREER LADDER

Developed by Dr. Roberta Bouverat  
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for  
Personnel Working with Young Children  
and their Families

| LEVEL                                                                  | TITLE                                                                                                                                                           | FUNCTION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Volunteer                                                              | Vocational-technical student<br>Community college student<br>High school student<br>Senior citizen<br>Parent                                                    | Works with children under direct supervision<br><br>Responds to spontaneous directions                                                                                                                                                                                   | On-the-job experience under supervision, with or without a training program                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Aide                                                                   | Vocational-technical student<br>Community college student<br>High school student<br>Parent                                                                      | Provides limited supervision to volunteers<br>Initiates assigned activities under supervision<br>Performs specifically described jobs                                                                                                                                    | Satisfactory completion of a training program, combined with on-the-job experiences                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| *A single individual often performs any or all of the functions below. |                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| CDA<br>Child Development<br>Associate<br>(Credential)                  | Headstart Teacher<br>Nursery School Teacher<br>Day Care Center Teacher                                                                                          | Assumes primary responsibility for young children in a group setting in 13 specified functions                                                                                                                                                                           | Age<br>Access to Center<br>Training<br>Experience                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| One-Year or<br>Two-Year Program<br>(Associate Degree)                  | Public-Private School Aide<br><i>Preschool</i><br>Headstart Teacher<br>Head Teacher<br>Assistant Teacher<br>Home-Based Teacher<br>Parent-Educational Specialist | Plans, organizes, implements educational programs with children<br><br>Provides protective services for children<br><br>Cooperates with organizations & agencies serving children & families                                                                             | High school plus completion of a 1- or 2-yr. program in a voc/tech institute or a community college in appropriate Early Childhood programs<br><br>Two years experience plus high school equivalency & workshops, courses at a voc/tech institute or community college in Early Childhood or Child Development |
|                                                                        | <i>Day Care</i><br>Program Supervisor<br>Family Day Care Mother<br>Teacher, Day Care Center<br>Assistant Teacher                                                | Plans and directs educational programs for children and families<br><br>May work directly with children                                                                                                                                                                  | At least 2 years successful experience working with children and completed or approved in progress training plan of 45 college quarter cr/hrs or equivalent training in Early Childhood Education courses or 450 clock hours.*                                                                                 |
|                                                                        | <i>Preschool</i><br>Administrator or Director<br>Educational Director, Head Start<br>Program Director, Head Start                                               | Provides supervision of aides, volunteers<br><br>Coordinates all activities of staff                                                                                                                                                                                     | Minimum licensing requirements for a Day Care Center — Dept. of Social and Health Services, March 10, 1975.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                                                                        | Director, Day Care Center<br>Asst. Director, Day Care Center<br><br>Curriculum Coordinator                                                                      | Promotes interaction with and utilization of community resources                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Bachelor's Degree plus experience in Early Childhood Education or Child Development                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Home-Based Educator                                                    | Head Teacher<br>Parent-Education Specialist                                                                                                                     | Manages & administers finances and budget<br><br>May have no teaching responsibilities<br><br>Interprets key legislation related to providing child care services<br><br>Participates in; the development of programs for adult working with young children and families |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                        | <i>Coordinator or Instructor</i><br>Vocational-Technical Institute                                                                                              | Behaves in professional manner with colleagues and school patrons                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Four-Year Program<br>(Baccalaureate Degree)                            | Community College<br><br>High School Home Economics Teacher                                                                                                     | Participates in professional organizations and inservice programs<br><br>Supervises and/or trains personnel<br><br>Develops, implements and coordinates Early Childhood Education course offerings                                                                       | Bachelor's Degree, Master's preferred, plus experience and certification in Early Childhood Education or Child Development                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                        | <i>Primary School</i><br>Kindergarten Teacher<br><br>Primary Level Teacher                                                                                      | Communicates and cooperates with community services for children and families                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|                                                                        | Primary Helping Teacher                                                                                                                                         | Carries out the curriculum programs of the school & school district                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

content must address the wide range of needs for all early childhood personnel.

Deriving personnel competencies is not a simple task. There are multiple considerations which must be taken into account. Specific training program content which would have generalized applicability for all early childhood personnel must consider situational variation, differences in training levels, geographical factors, and sociocultural differences in the backgrounds of trainees and prospective clientele.

Although training programs for early childhood personnel will have curricula unique to their settings, resources, and purposes, components of the guidelines do have generality. These training components called the "basic core" include:

### **The Basic Core:**

#### **Level I:**

1. Child Development
  - Introduction to growth and development, health and first aid, nutrition, exceptionality
2. Curriculum
  - Development of learning experience, multi-cultural, arts, language arts, math, science, physical activities, social studies
3. History and Background of Early Childhood Services
  - Professionalism
  - Introduction to early childhood: curriculum methods model programs
4. Interpersonal Relations
  - Self-awareness, parent involvement, adult-to-child/child-to-adult
  - Communications with others, staff, community
  - Group management
  - Interagencies referrals
5. Practicum
  - Field experiences in early childhood settings

#### **Level II: Includes 1-5 plus:**

6. Liberal Education
  - Distribution requirements (general education), i.e., humanities communication, social science, mathematics, science
7. Skills in Acquiring Knowledge
  - Remedial learning skills
  - Development of skills in the utilization of audio-visual materials/equipment, library material
  - Decision-making, assessment and evaluation
  - Professional associations through membership and participation

#### **Level III: Includes 1-7 plus:**

8. Interdisciplinary focus of preparation selected academic dis-

- ciplines related to early childhood
  - Broad perspective of academic disciplines plus a focus on an area of specialization, e.g., arts, child development, speech, recreation, etc.
- 9. Practicum of Professional Skills
  - Professional self-development, leadership, teaching, group dynamics, counseling, administration, community relations, intra-agency coordination

## GLOSSARY

### *Child Development Associate (CDA)*

A person able to meet the specific needs of a group of children in a child-development setting by nurturing children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth, by establishing and maintaining a proper child-care environment and by promoting good relations between parents and the child-development center.

CDAs are child-care workers who have shown their competence (ability) in working with preschool children in a center-based Head Start, nursery or day-care program.

### *Competency:*

Capability or skill which has been demonstrated and assessed as being of sufficient quality to meet set standards.

### *Day Care Center:*

An agency which regularly provides care for a group of 13 or more children for periods of not more than ten hours.

### *Early Childhood Certification:*

A written statement testifying to the demonstrated and documented competency of an individual for the care and education of infants and young children ages 0-8.

### *Head Start:*

A federally funded, innovative, experimental demonstration program designed to help break the cycle of poverty by providing children of low-income families with a comprehensive program to meet their educational, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs. The program is locally administered by community-based, non-profit organizations with required involvement of parents in parent education and program planning and operating activities. Head Start programs are monitored through federal mandate.

### *Mini Day Care Center:*

An agency which regularly provides care for a group of 12 or fewer children for periods of not more than ten hours in a facility other than the family abode; or for a group of 7 through 12 children in the family abode.

*Nursery School:*

An educational experience of less than 4 hours per day for children ages 2 through 5. Webster's Dictionary says "a school for children usually under five years of age."

*Paraprofessional:*

Trained personnel who assist the professional personnel and who work under their guidance.

*Parent Cooperative Preschool:*

Preschools where parents and children (children ranging in age from birth to five years) participate together in learning centers especially designed for young children. They provide opportunities for parents to expand their child's world while protecting their privilege of responsibility for their child's learning experiences.

*Preschool:*

The same as nursery school. Webster's Dictionary says "of, relating to, or constituting the period in a child's life from infancy to the age of five or six."

*This document is addressed to all who are responsible for promoting the care, development and learning of children. We will appreciate your reactions to the address below.*

To:  
WAEPECP  
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## COMPETENCY STRUCTURE

### OFFICIAL DEFINITION OF THE CDA

The Child Development Associate or CDA is a person able to meet the specific needs of a group of children in a child-development setting by nurturing children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth, by establishing and maintaining a proper child-care environment and by promoting good relations between parents and the child-development center.

#### COMPETENCY AREAS

I  
Establishes and  
maintains a  
safe and healthy  
environment

II  
Advances  
physical  
and intellectual  
competence

III  
Builds positive  
self-concept and  
individual  
strength

#### FUNCTIONAL AREAS (Key Words)

1. *Safe*  
2. *Healthy*  
3. *Environment*

4. *Physical*  
5. *Cognitive*  
6. *Language*  
7. *Creative*

8. *Self-Concept*  
9. *Individual Strength*

#### DEFINITIONS OF THE THIRTEEN FUNCTIONAL AREAS

1. **SAFE:**  
Candidate provides a safe environment by taking necessary measures to reduce or prevent accidents.
2. **HEALTHY:**  
Candidate provides an environment that is free of factors which may contribute to or cause illness.
3. **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**  
Candidate selects materials and equipment and arranges the room to provide an environment conducive to learning and appropriate to the developmental level and learning style of the children.
4. **PHYSICAL:**  
Candidate provides a variety of appropriate equipment, activities, and opportunities to promote the physical development of the children.
5. **COGNITIVE:**  
Candidate provides activities and experiences which encourage questioning, probing and problem-solving skills appropriate to the developmental level and learning style of the child.
6. **LANGUAGE:**  
Candidate helps children acquire and use language as a means of communicating their thoughts and feelings and of understanding others.
7. **CREATIVE:**  
Candidate provides a variety of appropriate experiences and media that stimulate children to explore and express their creative abilities.
8. **SELF-CONCEPT:**  
Candidate helps each child to know, accept and appreciate her/himself as an individual.
9. **INDIVIDUAL STRENGTH:**  
Candidate helps each child develop a sense of independence and acquire the ability to express, understand, and control feelings relative to her/his cultural ethnic group.

## COMPETENCY AREAS

### IV

Promotes  
positive  
functioning of  
children and  
adults in a group

### V

Brings about  
optimal  
coordination of  
home and center  
child-rearing  
practices and  
expectations

### VI

Carries out  
supplementary  
responsibilities  
related to  
programs

## FUNCTIONAL AREAS

### (Key Words)

10. *Social*

11. *Group Management*

12. *Home Center*

13. *Staff*

## DEFINITIONS OF THE THIRTEEN FUNCTIONAL AREAS

### 10. SOCIAL:

Candidate helps the children learn to get along with others and encourages feelings of mutual respect among the children in the group.

### 11. GROUP MANAGEMENT:

Candidate provides the group with a positive routine and simple rules with the group that are understood and accepted by children and adults.

### 12. HOME/CENTER:

Candidate establishes positive and productive relationships with parents and encourages them to participate in the center's activities.

### 13. STAFF:

Candidate works cooperatively with other staff members where the center's plans, activities, policies and rules are concerned.

## **CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE**

**(A COMPETENCY-BASED SYSTEM)**

### **What is a Child Development Associate?**

A Child Development Associate (CDA) is a person who has earned a credential in early childhood education/child development. To qualify, the individual must have been assessed and found competent in helping children to learn and develop. The CDA is qualified to assume responsibility for three-to-five-year-old children in a group setting and to work with their parents. A certain amount of formal or informal education or training is required.

### **How does the Credential Award System work?**

The CDA candidate's performance with children, staff and parents is assessed by a four-member team. The team includes:

- The Candidate - who brings a knowledge of self and a person perspective on her/his own performance with children;
- A Trainer/Advisor - who knows about the professional growth experiences of the Candidate and is well versed in the practices of early childhood education/child development in the region;
- A Parent-Community Representative - who shares the viewpoint of the community served by the Candidate and is familiar with the center in which the Candidate is being assessed;
- A Consortium Representative - who brings an outside perspective to the team and knows the assessment procedures.

These assessment team members gather different sorts of data. For instance, the Candidate is asked to put together a Portfolio containing samples of work with children. This may include curriculum materials, examples of home-center coordination, planning charts and the like. The Trainer/Advisor will write a wide-ranging report on the Candidate. The Parent-Community Representative will observe the Candidate and will find out how parents of children in the room react to the Candidate's work. The Consortium Representative will observe how the Candidate relates to a group of children, and then will hold a follow-up interview. All of this information is, of course, kept in strictest confidence.

This information is put together and is studied by the four members during the assessment team meeting. At the meeting, the team decides whether or not to recommend that the Candidate be awarded the CDA Credential. In addition, a Profile of the Candidate's strengths and weaknesses in working with children is prepared. This is given later to the Candidate.